

Message Text

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TAGS: SHUM PINT CH

SUBJ: FORUM ON RELIGIOUS STUDIES HELD IN PEKING

1. SUMMARY. ACCORDING TO A BRIEF REPORT IN THE APRIL 25 KANGMING DAILY, A PLANNING FORUM ON RELIGIOUS STUDIES WAS HELD IN PEKING ON APRIL 10 AND 11 UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE CHINESE ACADEMY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES. REMARKS ATTRIBUTED TO CONFERENCE PARTICIPANT AND PRE-CULTURAL REVOLUTION CULTURAL DZAR CHOU YANG MAKE PLAIN THAT RELIGION IN CHINA WILL BE STUDIED, NOT PRACTICED. CHOU "POINTED OUT" IN HIS SPEECH THAT "RESEARCH IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES MUST RESOLUTELY PROPAGANDIZE AND DEFEND MARXIST ATHEISM." END SUMMARY.

2. A SMALL BOX BURIED AT THE BOTTOM OF PAGE FOUR IN THE APRIL 25 KWANGMING DAILY REPORTS THAT THE FIRST CHINESE PLANNING FORUM ON ELIGIOUS STUDIES SINCE THE FOUding OF THE PRC WAS HELD IN PEKING ON APRIL 10 AND 11 UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE CHINESE ACADEMY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES INSTITUTE OF WORLD RELIGIONS. THE FORUM WAS PRESIDED OVER BY INSTITUTE "RESPONSIBLE PERSON" JEN CHI-YU; MAIN DELEGATES WERE CHINESE ACADEMY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES "ADVISOR" CHOU YANG, THE
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CHINESE CULTURAL CZAR NOTED FOR HIS DOGMATIC OUTLOOK BEFORE HE FELL IN THE EARLY STAGES OF THECULTURAL REVOLUTION, AND "RENOWNED SCHOLARS" PAI SHOU-68, CHI HSIEN-LIN, YA HAN-CHANG, AND MA CHIEN.

3. CHOU YANG SPELLED OUT THE GOALS OF THE REVIVIFIED ORGANIZATION IN HIS ADDRESS: "TO CARRY ON SERIOUS STUDY

OF THE HISTORY OF WORLD RELIGIONS .. TO COMPLIE A LARGE AMOUNT OF
MATERIALS .. AND TO TRANSLATE AND ANNOTATE THE SCRIPTURES
OF VARIOUS RELIGIONS."

4. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH THE REAPPEARANCE OF CHINESE RELIGIOUS
LEADERS AT THE CHINESE PEOPLE'S POLITICAL CONSULTATIVE
CONFERENCE AND THE NATIONAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS GENERATED
SOME JOURNALISTIC SPECULATION ON THE POSSIBILITY OF
A NEW ATMOSPHERER FAVORABLE TO RELIGION AND WORSHIP,
CHOU YANG'S REMARKS MAKE PLAN THAT RELIGIION IN CHINA
WILL BE STUDIED, NOT PRACTICED. HE "POINTED OUT," ENTIRELY
IN KEEPING WITH THE ORTHODOX SOCIALISS APPROACH TO RELIGION,
THAT "RESEARCH IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES MUST RESOLUTELY
PROPAGANDIZE AND DEFEND MARXIST ATHEISM, (ON THIS) THERE
MUST BE A CLEAR BANNER." THE BRIEF NEWS REPORT CLOSES
WITH AND OPTIMISTIC PREDICTION THAT "IT WILL BE COMPLETELY
POSSIBLE IN A RELATIVELY SHORT PERIOD OF TIME" TO
CREATE NEW SUCCESSES IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES "IN THE MIDST OF
THE STRUGGLE TO CRITICIZE RELIGION."
WOODCOCK

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